

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Corvallis

Weekly Announcements

Sunday, Mar 22 – Saturday, Mar 28

Sunday Worship and all other events at the Fellowship are CANCELLED at this time. We're offering a video-recorded service, sent out each week on UU-Announce.

“Strengthening the Core” Rev. Jill McAllister

So quickly, it has become clear how much we depend on external structures to keep our lives steady – grocery stores, doctors’ offices, restaurants, exercise facilities, and so much more! Suddenly, “everything is cancelled.” What can we depend on now? As the great teachers have always taught, real strength comes from within. We are presented with an incredible opportunity to strengthen our spiritual cores – those practices and sources of strength which can keep us physically, mentally and spiritually steady. So much is possible. It’s time to get started.

A Time for All Ages story and craft will also be sent out on Sunday.

From Jill

Dear all – every one of you: we are a little over one week in to what will likely prove to be a long “retreat” from life as it used to be. This is simply the reality. This week, the number of cases of the virus in the USA doubled from one day to the next. Unless we can help flatten the curve, exponential growth will continue. From my perspective, we must hunker down and start doing everything we can to sustain our minds, hearts, bodies and souls for this new way of life. Precautions will most likely get much stricter, because they must. It won’t help to worry about worst case scenarios (though I do), or what will happen to us. It will evolve as it evolves. We have to help ourselves live day to day in the best ways possible. This is what ethical living is all about, and always has been.

Israel mentioned a note from another UU church, describing its justice and outreach work: “The Church has left the building.” And here we are! The building does not make us a community. Now we begin to strengthen the bonds which truly hold us together. Fellowship staff members continue to work to respond to needs, to facilitate new structures for meeting, to check on members and friends, to develop ways new ways to connect. With UUFC leaders, we’re making new plans for things like the stewardship drive, the annual meeting, and the services auction. Some of you have asked about Fellowship finances: for the moment we are fine, and plan to continue to pay employees for the duration of this time. The budget will necessarily shift, but we will make it work. You’ll hear more about that in the coming weeks.

For now, I will do my best to answer all calls and e-mails as quickly as I can, and to reach out to as many of you as I can, just to find out how you’re doing, and what might be helpful to you. Fellowship Care and Support Team members are ready to help as well, and we have a team of counselors who are more than happy to talk with you. Just let me know what you need. And if, when, Fellowship members get sick, we will find ways to support them and their families, even if there is distance between us.

Life comes to us on its own terms. Every day is a gift. We will learn much about ourselves in this time, and we will find strengths we did not know we had. I’m sending my love to each of you.

Jill

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Fellowship Building to Remain Closed

There are no in-person gatherings at the Fellowship and we have cancelled all gatherings, meetings, and rentals, through May.

Prayer

by Rev. Florence Caplow

On this strange Sunday we gather together in new ways
Linked to each other through the delicate tracery of
electrons
And through the invisible bonds of caring and love,
Sharing with millions the wondering and fear and
uncertainty of this time
May each of us stay well and whole
May each of us find our ground of strength and clarity
May each of us let our hearts break open to new ways of
caring for our neighbor as ourselves
May each of us know, even if we are alone, that we are
held in a great embrace of love.

Fellowship Connections

Updates on coronavirus and the Fellowship: Our highest priority continues to be finding as many ways as possible to stay connected and help each other. Up-to-date information is posted on the UUFC website, and on UUAnnounce. Thanks to all who keep sharing information with us as we work to stay aware of developments.

Wednesday, March 25 at 11:30 am: “Virtual Coffee Hour, with Sharing of Sorrows and Joys” Join in by Zoom, for greeting and centering together, with sharing of struggles and silver linings. The zoom link will be sent via UUAnnounce.

Need help with grocery shopping? Able to help with shopping for others? Brooke Landberg will coordinate shopping for groceries and other essentials, to be delivered to the door of anyone who can't or doesn't want to go out in public at this time. E-mail or text Brooke if you need this help – she plans to do a first shopping trip on Monday, March 16. And, if you'd like to be a shopper for others please contact Brooke so that she can coordinate. Brooke Landberg: 727-415-6820, brooke.landberg@gmail.com

Connections by Phone: Do you need a phone buddy? If you'd like to have a regular phone call with a Fellowship buddy, please let Jill McA know. And, if you would like to be a caller, please let Jill know as well: minister@uucorvallis.org

UUFC Emergency Aid Fund: Financial aid is available, especially for those who might experience loss of income due to shutdowns. Requests should be addressed to Jill McA, minister@uucorvallis.org. And, for all those who want to contribute to this fund to help provide aid during this time (thank you!) checks can be made to UUFC with Emergency Aid Fund on the memo line.

Don't Forget Handwashing: Here's a new handwashing song to add to your repertoire: Sung to the tune of Amazing Grace, with thanks to Pastor Ben Williams, Christ United Methodist Church in Chapel Hill, NC. “Amazing soap! How sweet the smell, that keeps our hands germ free! Please wash your hands, and dry them, too, that we might healthy be.”

Birthday Club Thank-you's: Donations to the Birthday Club have been made by Karen Rosenberg, Michael Hughes, Carolyn Simmons, Brenda Sallee, and Bonnie Morihara. Thanks so much for supporting the Fellowship as you celebrate another trip around the sun! Contributions to the Birthday Club are always welcomed.

The annual UUFC Services Auction, planned for May 2nd is postponed, and will not be an in-person event. We're looking at possibilities for an on-line auction this year. Stay tuned. Questions? Contact Judy Westlake: judywestlake@comcast.net or 541-740-9457.

The Cold Weather Men's Shelter has closed for sleeping, due to being unable to put enough distance between beds for this susceptible population. The shelter is shifting to providing services during day-time hours.

Opportunities to Help

Samaritan Health Services is asking for donations of personal protective equipment (PPE for short) and testing supplies as it ramps up efforts to care for patients infected with COVID-19. The mid-valley health care network issued a statement on Thursday appealing for donations of facemasks of all kinds (not just the N-95 masks designed for use with respirators) as well as disposable gowns and gloves, citing a nationwide shortage of PPE. Samaritan also needs eye protection, swabs, viral transport tubes and 70% isopropyl alcohol. Donations of both opened and unopened packages of PPE and other supplies are accepted. Dentists are encouraged to donate, as are medical clinics that are scaling back services in response to Gov. Kate Brown's order to halt all non-emergency medical procedures. Donations can also come from industries such as construction, veterinary care, manufacturing, brewing and mining. To make a donation, call 541-768-6924 or email SHSFoundations@samhealth.org. Donations may be tax-deductible.

Help Needed: Can you sew? There is an under supply of PPE for the medical professionals who are on the front line of this pandemic as well as the general needs of our community. There are some forward thinking, incredible folk who have already tracked down the right material (tested for medical use), and continue to find supplies so we can make masks and gowns the hospital needs NOW, as well as whatever is to come. A fabric exchange (tightly woven cotton, no flannel or synthetics) will take place at Bi-Mart at 53rd and Philomath Blvd, Sat. March 21, 9-10:30 am. Local contact is Julie Williams 541-207-2219. You can find more information and how to make the masks here: <https://www.deaconess.com/How-to-make-a-Face-Mask?fbclid=IwAR114akKWJ4I4yZdVaEo5pLu8-gymGb-mc4Nl828an5ptKWF4AZHNje079U>.

Local Businesses in need of support: Heartland Humane Society and the Heartland Thrift shop have also been hit by closure due to precautions about the Virus. They are local, they depend on contributions. The animals in their care still need food, shelter and care. Donations are welcome! Also Arc Thrift Stores have also closed indefinitely due to lack of shoppers and the risk of handling donations. The two thrift stores in Philomath and Corvallis are the main source of funding for the Arc of Benton County which provides services and advocacy for people with developmental disabilities. Your support for Arc is also welcomed.

Perspectives on the Pandemic

For understanding the severity of this crisis, the need for everyone to do the best they can at helping decrease the spread of the virus, and some of the justice issues involved, here are several good sources of information:

Science reporter Ed Yong (the Atlantic) unpacks what we know about this particular strand of coronavirus—and why it's so good at spreading.

David Brooks: Screw This Virus! We had to be set apart in order to feel together.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/19/opinion/coronavirus-isolation.html?smid=em-share>

From Valerie Kaur at "Love Resists": "For some of us, the people we hold dear are close at hand. Others may be many time zones away. If people we love are in prison or detention, the inability to take care of them, and knowing the "social distancing" the rest of us are committing to is not available to them, can be incredibly hard. The United States has 2.3 million people in prison – the most in the world. There are 38,000 immigrants and asylum seekers in ICE detention today. They are all at risk with the spread of COVID-19. Yet these unprecedented times have also made unimaginable changes suddenly possible, especially in the struggle against criminalization. Counties are releasing low-level offenders from jail. A coalition of progressive Prosecutors offices have issued a statement on COVID-19 and the rights and needs of those in custody, committing to changes to reduce incarceration." You can help: 1. Take action NOW to call on ICE to release all immigrants from detention. 2. Five Ways to Organize Locally to Get People Free & Reduce Risk of COVID-19 for People in Detention and Prisons"

A choir performance to lift your spirits! Over the Rainbow High School Choir

Stewardship: Caring for a Community in Hard Times

Stewardship has always meant the careful and loving sustaining of a system – whether a household, a village, an eco-system or any other community of relatedness. Stewardship is at the foundation of the Fellowship as a religious congregation. Together, we care for and maintain this community and its resources to carry out our mission in the present, and to sustain the ability to carry out our mission in the future. What does this mean in the present circumstances, as the entire world faces the disruptions of a pandemic?

Our care and support for each other, which has long been at the heart of congregational life, is paramount now. Circumstances are changing for everyone. Our fundamental question remains, "How do we live in right relations", even in these days. And what does it mean to take care of our resources now? Staff and employees, buildings and grounds, renters and suppliers? These are new questions for us, and we are working to find new ways.

Fellowship members and friends have sustained the Fellowship over decades. The support of all has been essential, and it remains essential. For all who have helped sustain us, and who continue that support, may you know how important you are, and how much appreciated you are. Now, together, we will learn what it means to maintain stewardship of our community through hard times. Thank you, all!

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